

REMARKS

The Office Action of May 6, 2003 presents the examination of claims 1-16. The Examiner appears to have overlooked the inclusion in the application of the claims amended pursuant to Article 19 during the prosecution of the International Application of which this application is the National Stage. These amended claims include claim 17.

The present paper cancels claims 1-17, substituting therefore new claims 18-54. The new claims are directed to the same subject matter as original claims 1-17, but are amended to i) describe statutory subject matter, i.e. processes reciting active steps and products of said processes, rather than non-statutory "uses" and ii) to obviate rejections for lack of clarity, i.e. to introduce dependent claims reciting "preferred" ranges stated in the original claims and to make explicit features originally stated in some claims as being set forth in others (e.g. "as defined in claims 1 and 2"). The new claims also introduce a number of editorial amendments to further clarify the claim language. Applicants submit that the amendments to the claims completely address each of the reasons the Examiner sets forth for rejecting the claims under 35 USC § 101 and 35 USC § 112, second paragraph.

The present paper also provides a substitute abstract and makes a minor amendment to the specification as suggested by the Examiner.

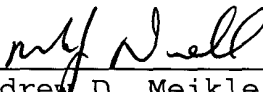
Applicants submit that the present application well describes and claims patentable subject matter. The favorable action of withdrawal of the standing rejections and allowance of the application is respectfully requested.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Mark J. Nuell (Reg. No. 36,623) at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16 or 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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Attachment(s): Abstract of the Disclosure